

a stage with a vacuum. A linear laser beam may be selected for irradiating a substrate when uniform crystallization of the irradiated (scan) surface is desired. During the scan, the linear laser beam irradiates the entire scan surface. If the substrate is warped, the focal point of the linear laser beam may shift. The shift in the focal point may result in shifts in power delivered to the surface, which may in turn result in varied crystallization of the irradiated surface, as described at page 4, lines 22-31 of the Specification.

Imahashi et al. disclose irradiating a substrate surface with a linear laser beam, but do not teach flattening the substrate during the irradiation operation.

Celler et al. disclose irradiating a substrate with a laser beam focused to a spot, not a line (column 7, line 5 and Figures 3-7). Celler et al. disclose scanning the spot in different patterns, none of which fully irradiates the scan surface. Furthermore, Celler et al. recommend varying the power of the spot laser over the scan, e.g., at the scan edges, to avoid damaging the substrate surface (column 4, lines 5-7).

Neither Imahashi et al. nor Celler et al. contemplate the problem of fully irradiating a scan surface while maintaining a consistent power level.

Consider independent claims 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, and 22, which recite in relevant part:

". . . irradiating said semiconductor film with a laser beam having a cross section which is elongated in one direction while relatively moving said substrate with respect to said laser beam, while said lower surface of said substrate is in contact with said flat surface of the stage."


Neither Imahashi et al. nor Celler et al., either alone or in combination, teach or suggest irradiating a semiconductor

film on a substrate with a linear laser beam while flattening the substrate against a stage. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, and 22, and their dependencies, are allowable.

Applicant submits that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance, which action is requested. It is believed that there is no fee due at this time. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 11/30/00



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